

# A historic day for Tarkiln

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It's official: The Tarkiln twin schoolhouses are now a historic landmark.

Last Wednesday, amid the bustle of the Duxbury Farmers and Artisans Market that now occupies the front lawn of the school, a plaque was unveiled stating that the school, along with 12 other sites in Duxbury, is on the National Register of Historic Places.

"We saved this building from a bulldozer," said Terry Vose, a member of the Tarkiln

Study Committee that worked for years to save the property from development, sale or razing. A multi-million dollar renovation was defeated at Town Meeting in 2008, but a more modest proposal for \$435,000 passed voters' muster this year.

"Congratulations go out to so many of you for the transformation of this building," said Norm Tucker, who worked with the town to obtain the historic designation. "I can't think of a better day

continued on page 12



A proud moment for the folks who worked to restore Tarkiln, as the National Historic Register of Places plaque was unveiled on Wednesday. Pictured are Barbara Kiley of the Historic Commission, DPW Director Peter Buttus, Town Manager Richard MacDonald, Friends of Tarkiln Chairwoman Susanna Sheehan, Norman Tucker, Laura Doherty, Terry Vose, Tag Carpenter and longtime Tarkiln caretaker Jack Williams.

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12

Duxbury Clipper

## Historic day for Tarkiln school

continued from page one

[to unveil the plaque] when this building is so very much alive."

The renovation project at Tarkiln has been underway since last year with the use of volunteer labor and donations to paint the exterior and with the installation of a new roof and new septic system.

Tarkiln consists of two one-room schoolhouses built in 1871 and 1908 respectively. The two halls were joined in 1926 via a middle building containing bathrooms and a basement. Tarkiln was used as a school until 1949 when it became a youth center and fi-

nally a community center.

Until its closure in 2006, Tarkiln was used seven days a week by numerous community groups for meetings and activities.

Vose thanked Town Manager Richard MacDonald for "being the first cog in the wheel" in the process of getting the building on the historic register.

"It's one of the defining features of the town," Vose said of Tarkiln. "Once it's gone, you lose history."

Tarkiln Study Committee Chairman Tag Carpenter said that thousands of volunteers have helped restore the build-

ing after it had been run-down during years of abandonment.

"I want to thank the citizens of Duxbury for voting for the money in the first place," he said. "We've really preserved an asset for the long term."

Carpenter also said that it is hoped the building will reopen to the public as a community center in September. The Recreation Department will handle the rentals. Carpenter also said an open house is being planned, and possibly a reunion of Duxbury residents who once attended the school.